

# The Woman in White

Wilkie Collins



## About the author

Wilkie (William) Collins can be described as the author of the first full-length detective stories in English. Born in London in 1824, he was the son of a landscape painter. He was educated at private schools, but received his real education on a two-year tour of Italy with his family. He trained as a lawyer, but became a full-time writer in his early twenties. During the 1860s, with the publication of novels of mystery, suspense and crime, he became a household name. Of these novels, *The Woman in White* (1860) and *The Moonstone* (1868) were the most successful, and are still widely read today.

Collins was very highly thought of by contemporary critics and his books were widely read in both America and Europe. The famous British author Charles Dickens was his friend and mentor, and like Dickens, Collins was a tireless social campaigner. After 1870, Collins's novels concentrated more on social issues such as prostitution and vivisection than on good story-telling.

Collins suffered from gout, and was addicted to opium for the last twenty-seven years of his life (at the time, opium was considered to be a safe painkiller). Collins's private life was unconventional: he had two mistresses and married neither of them, although he had three children by one, Martha Rudd. He died in 1889.

## Summary

Late one night on a lonely road a young art teacher, Walter Hartright, meets a strange woman dressed all in white. They talk together and Walter is puzzled by the fact that the woman knows a member of the family he is about to start work with. Walter goes to Limmeridge

House and starts his new job, teaching art to two half sisters, Laura Fairlie and Marian, whose parents are both dead. He falls in love with Laura, who closely resembles the 'woman in white', but Laura marries another man, as she promised to her father. She is unhappy, as her husband is interested only in her money. He also has a terrible secret that the 'woman in white' knows. He and his sinister friend plot to steal Laura's money by substituting the 'woman in white' for Laura. But Laura's husband dies in a fire trying to eliminate the traces of his forgery. Laura and Walter reunite and get married.

## PART I

**Chapter 1:** One night Walter meets a strange woman dressed all in white. They talk together and Walter is very much surprised to hear the woman talking about the place and the family he is on his way to see. Before he can ask her any questions, she disappears.

**Chapter 2:** Walter goes to Cumberland. At Limmeridge House he meets his pupils, Marian and Laura, who are half-sisters. Walter notices that Laura resembles the 'woman in white' very much. He tells Marian about the strange woman. She is keen to help him solve the mystery.

**Chapter 3:** Walter enjoys his life at Limmeridge House. He falls in love with Laura and makes friends with Marian. But Marian advises him to leave Limmeridge House, because Laura is engaged to baronet Sir Percival Glyde, who is coming soon. Laura receives an anonymous warning against her future marriage, and Walter remembers the 'woman in white' talking about some wicked and cruel baronet. He thinks the warning letter is from that woman.

**Chapter 4:** Walter goes to the churchyard to see the strange woman who was seen there. They meet and she gives him her name, Anne Catherick, and that she has escaped from the asylum where Sir Percival shut her up. Then she gets frightened and runs away.

**Chapter 5:** Before Walter goes away, he and Marian go to the village to find Anne Catherick to talk to her. When they arrive, they find that Anne has already gone.

**Chapter 6:** Mr Gilmore, the family lawyer, comes to draw up the marriage settlement. He sends a copy of the warning letter to Sir Percival asking for an explanation. Walter leaves Limmeridge House. Laura is very unhappy as she is in love with Walter.

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**Chapter 7:** Sir Percival Glyde comes to Limmeridge House and explains that Anne's mother used to be his loyal servant. To thank her, he paid for her daughter Anne, who has mental problems, to be placed in an asylum. Marian writes a letter to Mrs Catherick and receives confirmation that this is true. After that Laura agrees to marry Sir Percival, as she does not want to break her promise to her late father.

**Chapter 8:** When discussing the marriage settlement, Sir Percival insists on having his wife's money in case of her death. Mr Gilmore does not like the idea. As Laura is not twenty-one yet, he visits her uncle, Mr Fairlie, to discuss it. But Mr Fairlie agrees to Sir Percival's claims.

**Chapter 9:** Walter leaves for Central America for eighteen months. Laura's wedding date is decided – 22 December – in four weeks' time. Sir Percival tries to find Anne Catherick, but she is gone. Sir Percival and Laura get married and leave for Italy.

### PART 2

**Chapter 1:** Six months later Marian comes to Blackwater Park, Sir Percival's house, where she learns that Mrs Catherick has secretly visited to find out any news about her daughter. Marian decides to visit Mrs Catherick.

**Chapter 2:** Sir Percival and Laura come from Italy with Count Fosco, Sir Percival's friend. Laura is very unhappy, it's clear now that her husband married her for her money only. To clear out his debts he needs to obtain his wife's money. Marian overhears a conversation and tells Laura about it.

**Chapter 3:** Sir Percival learns about Mrs Catherick's visit which makes him very angry. He tries to make Laura sign some document about her money but fails. Outraged, Sir Percival leaves Blackwater Park.

**Chapter 4:** Marian and Laura go to an old boathouse and see a strange figure. They become frightened and go home, but someone is following them, and it is not Count Fosco. Laura goes to the boathouse again and meets Anne Catherick there. Anne tells her she wrote the warning and followed her last time. She also says she knows a terrible secret about Sir Percival. Suddenly she gets frightened and runs away without revealing the secret.

**Chapter 5:** Sir Percival comes back. Count Fosco, who has seen Laura's meeting with Anne, tells him about the meeting, and they go to the boathouse to wait for Anne

there. But Anne never appears. Sir Percival reads Anne's note to Laura and becomes frustrated.

**Chapter 6:** Marian eavesdrops on Sir Percival and Count Fosco plotting to obtain Laura's money in the event of her death. Count Fosco asks about the woman he has seen with Laura in the boathouse. Sir Percival explains it is Anne Catherick and says that by coincidence, she looks as if his wife would look after a long illness.

**Chapter 7:** When spying on Sir Percival and Count Fosco, Marian becomes so terribly ill and is bedridden. Sir Percival closes up Blackwater Park, and Count Fosco moves to London. Laura is told that he has taken Marian with him and she also leaves for London. But Marian is still at Blackwater Park. She had been moved to another room.

**Chapter 8:** Lady Glyde arrives at Count Fosco's house. She looks very frightened and very ill. The next day she dies. Lady Glyde's body is sent to Limmeridge and buried in her mother's grave.

**Chapter 9:** Walter Hartright returns to Britain, where he learns about Laura's death. He goes to Limmeridge to visit Laura's grave, as he still loves her. But in the churchyard he meets Marian, and the still very much alive, Laura.

### PART 3

**Chapter 1:** Marian, Laura and Walter rent a small flat in London. Marian tells Walter their story. After she recovered from her illness, she learned that Laura had died of a heart problem. Anne Catherick had been found and put in the asylum again. Her mental problems got worse and she thinks she is Lady Glyde. Marian went to the asylum and found Laura there. She helped Laura to escape, and they went to Limmeridge, where they met Walter.

**Chapter 2:** Laura says that Count Fosco met her in London and took her to some place to meet her sister. There he gave her a cup of strange tea, she fainted and recovered in the asylum. Using their similar appearance Sir Percival and Count Fosco placed Laura in the asylum as Anne Catherick, and moved Anne to Count Fosco's house, where she died as Lady Glyde.

**Chapter 3:** Walter wants to find out Sir Percival's secret so he can use it to destroy him and goes to see Mrs Catherick. At the end of a difficult conversation, she tells him to go to the church and look at the book of marriage records.

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**Chapter 4:** Walter goes to the church and finds that the entry for Sir Percival's parents' marriage is a forgery – his parents never married, which means that he is not a baronet and has no legal rights for Blackwater Park. Moreover, he can be sent to prison.

**Chapter 5:** Sir Percival understands he is in danger and comes to the church to destroy the forged page. He accidentally starts a fire, gets trapped inside and dies.

**Chapter 6:** Sir Percival's death is officially recognized as death by accident. Walter receives a note from Mrs Catherick explaining the extraordinary resemblance of Laura and Anne – they are half-sister, and have the same father.

**Chapter 7:** Walter comes back to London. He tells Marian the whole story, but they decide to tell Laura only about her husband's death. Walter and Laura get married. Walter brings Laura to Limeridge House where he explains what has happened. She is legally recognized as being alive, and after her uncle's death, inherits Limeridge House.

### Background and themes

**Where the story came from:** The plot of *The Woman in White*, although very exciting, seems unlikely: a woman is robbed of her money when her identity is confused with another woman who looks like her. It is now known that Collins found the basic plot for *The Woman in White* in a book of French crimes which he bought from a bookstall in Paris. This book, *Recueil des Causes Celebres*, by Maurice Mejan, gave an account of a sensational lawsuit which was strikingly similar to the events in Collins's novel. There are even similarities between the people in the lawsuit and the main characters in the novel.

Similarly, the dramatic meeting of the hero Walter Hartright with the 'woman in white' at night on a lonely road, also had a basis in real life. The famous English painter, John Millais, tells the story of how he and Collins were walking in North London one evening, when they heard a scream in a garden nearby. A young and beautiful woman in a long white dress came running towards them, begging for help. Collins followed her and did not return that night. The woman's name was Caroline Graves and Collins subsequently lived with her for many years.

**Genre:** Written in 1860, *The Woman in White* is one of the most successful examples of 'the novel of sensation'. This genre of fiction first started in the 1860s and was characterized by stories of mystery and crime – sinister secrets that were slowly uncovered, in an atmosphere of great suspense. Even though the events were often unlikely and sensational, they took place in everyday settings of the time, and this created a feeling of greater realism. Wilkie Collins was a master of this genre.

**Modern detective novel:** The 'novel of sensation' gave rise to the modern detective novel. Indeed, in *The Woman in White*, Walter Hartright and Marian act as amateur detectives. *The Moonstone* (1868), Collins's other huge success, is even more of a detective story.

**Heroes and heroines:** Novels of this kind generally have a hero, a heroine and a villain. In *The Woman in White*, there are two heroines and two villains. Laura, the woman Walter loves, is the type of woman popular with Englishmen in the nineteenth century. She is very beautiful, very feminine, and very inactive; she does almost nothing. Laura's sister, Marian, on the other hand, is extremely clever, practical and active; she takes care of Laura. She is also ugly. The novel demonstrates the strong tendency of men in nineteenth century England to see desirable women as very feminine and passive.

**Villains:** The two villains in *The Woman in White* are Sir Percival Glyde, Laura's husband, and his friend, Count Fosco. Sir Percival, although evil, is not as clever as Count Fosco. It is Count Fosco who thinks up the plan that substitutes the 'woman in white' for Laura, and it is he who carries out the plan. This adds complexity and interest to the story; and what fun it is to have two villains rather than one!

**Suspense:** When Wilkie Collins wrote *The Woman in White*, he was at the height of his writing ability. The plot is detailed and carefully worked out. The creation of suspense is extremely skillful. The book was first written in serial form and consequently chapters often end on a note of suspense. The author uses the new and experimental technique of different characters telling the story at different points. This is a superb way of creating greater interest, and Collins brilliantly creates an atmosphere of fear. It is no surprise that the novel remains so popular today.

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## Discussion activities

### PART 1

#### Chapters 1–3

##### Before reading

- 1 Guess and discuss:** Have students look at the cover of the book and discuss the following: *What genre is this book? Why do you think so?*
- 2 Discuss:** Collins's novels are called novels of sensation. Ask students to discuss this: *What do you imagine are the main features of his novels?*

##### While reading

- 3 Discuss:** Have students discuss the following questions: *What's Mr Fairlie's attitude towards the girls? How do you think it will influence their lives?*

##### After reading

- 4 Discuss:** Put students into small groups, and ask them to answer the following:  
*In each chapter, one or two strange things happen. Say what these strange things are. Is there an explanation for these events? If so, what is the explanation or what might it be?*
- 5 Write:** Ask students to imagine they are Walter Hartright. They write a letter to his mother describing his life at Limmeridge House.

#### Chapters 4–6

##### Before reading

- 6 Guess:** Will Walter and Marian find the 'woman in white'?  
In pairs, students write five ideas for what might happen in the next chapters. Have them compare their ideas in small groups.

##### While reading

- 7 Check:** In groups, students check their ideas from activity 6. *Who was most close to the book?*
- 8 Role play:** In pairs, students plan and act out the conversation about local news between the farmer's wife and Anne Catherick. *Student A* is the farmer's wife and tells Anne Catherick about the local news. *Student B* is Anne Catherick who looks pale and sad.

##### After reading

- 9 Discuss:** Have students discuss the following questions: *What is your opinion of the Woman in White so far? Do you think she is mad? Give reasons for your opinions.*
- 10 Group work:** In small groups students decide on an illustration for each chapter. The picture must illustrate the most important event in the chapter. Each group then describes their illustration to the class.
- 11 Role play:** Imagine Walter and Laura express their true feelings for each other before they part. In pairs, students plan and act out their conversation. *Student A* is Walter and *Student B* is Laura.

- 12 Write:** Ask students to write an entry for Laura's diary about Walter's departure. *Is she upset? Is she sad? What does she think and hope?*

#### Chapters 7–9

##### Before reading

- 13 Discuss:** Ask students to discuss these questions: *What do you think Walter is going to do after he leaves Limmeridge House? Do you think he was right to leave? Why/Why not?*

##### While reading

- 14 Role play:** In pairs, students plan and act out the conversation between Sir Percival and Mr Gilmore about the anonymous letter Laura received. *Student A* is Sir Percival and explains why Anne was put in an asylum. *Student B* is Mr Gilmore and asks Sir Percival questions.
- 15 Write:** Ask students to imagine they are Marian. Write a letter to Mrs Catherick asking for the information to prove Sir Percival's explanations.  
*Dear Mrs Catherick,*  
*I am writing you to ask you about ...*  
*I hope to hear from you soon.*  
*Warm regards,*  
*Marian Halcombe*

##### After reading

- 16 Discuss:** Have students discuss the following: *What ideas did Sir Percival's lawyer's note give to Mr Gilmore?*
- 17 Research and discuss:** Laura's marriage is an 'arranged marriage' – in other words, a marriage where the parents choose the marriage partner for their son or daughter. Have students do research on arranged marriages on the Internet. *What are the advantages and disadvantages of arranged marriages? Do you agree with the idea of arranged marriages?*
- 18 Research:** Ask students to find out and write about the position of women in Britain in the nineteenth century. *What role did a marriage settlement play in their lives?*

### PART 2

#### Chapters 1–4

##### While reading

- 19 Discuss:** Have students discuss the following: *Why do you think Count Fosco came to the Blackwater Park? What role will he play in the story?*
- 20 Discuss:** Have students discuss the following: *What do you think Sir Percival's 'terrible secret' could be?*

##### After reading

- 21 Group work:** In small groups, students write one sentence about each of the following characters. Each group then reads their sentences out to the class and the class votes for the sentence that best describes each character:  
Laura, Marian, Sir Percival Glyde, Count Fosco, Walter Hartright



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**22 Discuss:** Ask students to think about the following:  
*How do you feel about the book so far? Give reasons for your feelings.*

**23 Write:** Have students imagine they are Laura. Students write a letter to Walter in which Laura describes her present life and tells him her true feelings towards him and Sir Percival.

### Chapters 5–9

#### While reading

**24 Write:** Get students to see what happened in the Blackwater Park through Count Fosco's eyes and write them down.

#### After reading

**25 Discuss:** Ask students to discuss the following: *In your opinion, what is the main motive of the following characters? In other words, what is it that makes them do the things they do?*

Marian, Laura, Sir Percival, Count Fosco

**26 Discuss:** Have students discuss this: *Both Sir Percival and Count Fosco are wicked men. Which man do you think is worse? Give reasons for your opinion.*

**27 Group work:** In small groups, students discuss the following question: *What do you think is the most dramatic moment in each of these chapters? Then they put the dramatic moments in order from most dramatic to least dramatic and compare their order to other groups, giving reasons for their order.*

### PART 3

#### Chapters 1–3

##### Before reading

**28 Guess:** In small groups, students write three questions they would like to know about what really happened and why Laura was alive and standing in front of her own grave.

##### After reading

**29 Check:** Ask students to answer the questions they wrote for activity 28.

**30 Role play:** Each student chooses one of the characters from the book. Have students walk around the class asking each other 'yes/no' questions. They can ask up to five questions each. The other students must guess who they are.

**31 Discuss and write:** In small groups, students discuss whether or not they agree with the following statement, giving reasons for their opinion. After discussion, ask them to write one or two paragraphs about it.

*Marian is the real heroine of The Woman in White.*

**32 Write:** Have students write an explanation of what Sir Percival and Count Fosco did to Laura, Marian and Anne Catherick. *Do you think Sir Percival and Count Fosco are bad people? Why/Why not?*

### Chapters 4–7

#### Before reading

**33 Guess:** Have students guess the following: *What do you think will happen to Sir Percival? Will his secret be made public?*

#### While reading

**34 Check:** Have students check their answers to the questions from activity 33.

**35 Write:** Ask students to imagine they are Walter. Write a message to Marian describing his first meeting with Mrs Catherick.

#### After reading

**36 Write:** Have students imagine they are Mr Gilmore. Write a letter to Mr Fairlie informing him that Laura is alive and is coming to Limmeridge House.

**37 Group work:** In small groups, students tell the story of these chapters from the point of view of the following characters. Each student takes it in turns to say one sentence.

- a Marian
- b Laura
- c Walter

#### Extra activities

**38 Project:** In groups, students work on the following: *What does this book tell us about the morals of the nineteenth century? Compare the social situation of those days with the present one. What has changed? Do you think the changes are for the better? Why/Why not? Present your findings in a book or magazine format.*

**39 Discuss and group work:** Collins's advice to other writers was: 'Make 'em laugh, make 'em cry, make 'em wait.' ('em = them, i.e. the readers) In small groups, students discuss how Collins does this in *The Woman in White*. Students can look through the book to find examples. Then have a whole-class discussion about it.

# The Woman in White

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## While reading

### PART 1

#### Chapters 1–3

- 1 Find the words which mean the following.
  - a (page 1) a quickly-made drawing  
.....
  - b (page 6) a very large amount of money  
.....
  - c (page 8) to worry .....
  - d (page 10) an official agreement  
.....
  - e (page 11) a female servant .....
- 2 Who is speaking and to whom? What is the speaker talking about?
  - a 'Tell me how I can help you.'
  - b 'How I wish I was going there too.'
  - c 'He's not very keen on visitors.'
  - d 'I've found out something interesting.'
  - e 'You must leave Limmeridge House at once.'

#### Chapters 4–6

- 3 All the sentences are wrong. Correct them.
  - a In the churchyard the boy saw a woman dressed in a long dark-blue coat.  
.....  
.....
  - b The Woman in White came to the churchyard to meet Walter Hartright.  
.....  
.....
  - c The Woman in White missed her mother and was planning to visit her.  
.....  
.....
  - d Mr Fairlie was really glad that Walter was leaving as he didn't like him.  
.....  
.....
  - e Mr Gilmore was a detective who investigated the case of Anne Catherick.  
.....  
.....
  - f At Walter's last dinner at Limmeridge House everyone was very excited and talked a lot.  
.....  
.....

## Chapters 7–9

### 4 Complete these sentences. Then find the sentences in the book and check your answers.

- a He told us that several years ago he had a ..... called Mrs Catherick.
- b To my surprise Marian seemed to show some .....
- c I therefore ..... the marriage settlement according to her wishes.
- d 'If you decide to object to the marriage settlement, Sir Percival must .....'
- e Walter Hartright had given her a little book ..... some of his drawings.
- f I really hoped that Mr Fairlie's nerves would be ..... for the rest of the day.
- g Sir Percival arrived at Limmeridge House, bringing with him some really beautiful ..... for Laura.

### PART 2

#### Chapters 1–4

- 5 Find the words which mean the following.
  - a (page 34) someone who cooks and cleans for another person in their house .....
  - b (page 34) a member of your family who lived a long time ago .....
  - c (page 35) dark, especially in a way that seems sad .....
  - d (page 35) someone whose job is to look after animals and birds that are wild and are hunted in private land .....
  - e (page 37) not knowing about the bad things in life .....
  - f (page 39) to move very quietly and slowly .....
  - g (page 42) to give attention to something .....
  - h (page 43) the way in which two people behave towards each other .....
  - i (page 45) to find a solution to a problem .....
- 6 Mark each statement true (T) or false (F).
  - a Marian visited Mrs Catherick and had a chat with her.
  - b Marian admired Count Fosco as she thought he was a very attractive and interesting man.

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- c This time Mr Merriman brought good news for Sir Percival.
- d Marian got extremely worried when she heard the conversation between Mr Merriman and Sir Percival.
- e Sir Percival learnt about Mrs Catherick's visit from the housekeeper.
- f Sir Percival needed Laura's signature badly.
- g The mysterious figure Marian and Laura saw near the lake was Anne Catherick.

### Chapters 5–9

#### 7 Complete the following sentences.

- a If Marian hadn't gone down to the lake, she wouldn't .....
- b If Count Fosco hadn't seen Anne, Anne .....
- c If Marian hadn't been out on the balcony, she .....
- d If it hadn't been wet and cold, Marian .....
- e If Walter Hartright did not go to visit Lady Glyde's grave, he .....

#### 8 Put these events in the order of the time at which they occurred.

- a  Laura arrives at Count Fosco's house.
- b  Mrs Michelson realizes that Sir Percival deceived her and Laura: Marian is still at Blackwater Park.
- c  Walter meets Laura again.
- d  Laura leaves Blackwater Park.
- e  Sir Percival decides to close up Blackwater Park.
- f  Laura dies.

### PART 3

#### Chapters 1–3

#### 9 Mark each statement true (T) or false (F).

- a Sir Percival and Count Fosco had left Blackwater Park before Marian recovered.
- b On receiving the news about Laura's death Marian hurried to London.

- c Eventually Sir Percival and Count Fosco managed to find Anne Catherick.
- d Anne Catherick was put at the asylum again.
- e Count Fosco deceived Laura by telling her that her sister was waiting for her in London.
- f Count Fosco was much more clever than his friend.
- g The plan was based on one extraordinary feature.
- h Mr Fairlie was really happy to hear that Laura was alive.
- i Mrs Catherick shared the secret with Walter because she wanted to take revenge on her former lover.

### Chapters 4–7

#### 10 All these sentences are false. Correct them.

- a Sir Percival couldn't get out of the church because someone had locked it. ....
- b Sir Percival's servant tried to rescue him. ....
- c Laura's guardian was Anne Catherick's father. ....
- d Count Fosco died in London. ....
- e Mr Fairlie died of a fever. ....
- f Marian inherited Limmeridge House. ....

### After reading

- 11 **Discuss:** In small groups, discuss the following question: *If people were animals, what animal would the following characters be?* Compare the results as a whole class, giving reasons for your choice.  
Walter, Laura, Marian, Sir Percival, Mr Gilmore, Mrs Catherick.
- 12 **Discuss:** In your opinion, in what way is *The Woman in White* a detective novel? Who is/are the detective(s)?

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## PART 1

### Chapters 1–3

#### 1 Choose the right sentence. Write 1 or 2.

- a Walter Hartright didn't want to take his new job because .....
- 1) he didn't want to leave London.
  - 2) he had a strange feeling about it.
- b Walter's meeting with Mr Fairlie was very short because .....
- 1) Mr Fairlie got tired very quickly.
  - 2) Mr Fairlie didn't like the new teacher.
- c Marian told Walter to go away because .....
- 1) Laura was going to marry Sir Percival.
  - 2) she didn't want Laura to marry a poor teacher.

### Chapters 4–6

#### 2 Who did that? Write in the correct name.

- a ..... took Walter to the churchyard.
- b ..... cleaned the marble cross.
- c ..... wrote to Mr Gilmore about the warning letter.
- d ..... told Anne that Sir Percival Glyde was coming.
- e ..... has very delicate nerves and allows Mr Hartright to leave.
- f ..... sends a copy of the letter to Sir Percival Glyde.

### Chapters 7–9

#### 3 Put these events in the order of the time at which they occurred. Write 1–5.

- a  Marian helps Walter find work abroad.
- b  Mr Gilmore and Mr Merriman have a dispute over the marriage settlement.
- c  Sir Percival Glyde explains the situation.
- d  The wedding date is fixed.
- e  Mr Fairlie accepts Sir Percival's wishes.

## PART 2

### Chapters 1–4

#### 4 Choose the correct word.

- a Mrs Michelson / Marian found the dog.
- b Sir Percival was really a *charming and polite* / *cruel and wicked* man.
- c Count Fosco was a very *kind* / *dangerous* man.
- d When Marian heard Laura's story about her married life, she felt *relieved* / *guilty*.
- e Laura told Marian that she had lost the *bracelet* / *necklace* that Marian had given her as a wedding present.

- f Laura spoke to *Sir Percival* / *Anne Catherick* at the boathouse.
- g Anne Catherick hates the name *Fairlie* / *Glyde*.

### Chapters 5–9

#### 5 Mark each statement true (T) or false (F).

- a Count Fosco saw Laura talking to Anne Catherick.
- b Both Sir Percival and Count Fosco needed Laura's money.
- c Marian didn't go to the boathouse with Laura to meet Anne because it was raining heavily.
- d Count Fosco was afraid of Anne Catherick.
- e Soon after coming to London, Laura died.
- f Anne Catherick looks exactly like Laura would after a long illness.
- g Walter Hartright was too heartbroken after learning of Laura's death to return to Limmeridge House.

## PART 3

### Chapters 1–3

#### 6 Who did that? Write in the correct name.

- a ..... had changed a lot since Walter saw her for the first time.
- b ..... wrote a letter to Mr Fairlie about Anne Catherick.
- c ..... used all her money to help Laura.
- d ..... changed Anne's and Laura's clothes.
- e ..... didn't show any emotion at hearing about Anne's death.
- f ..... wanted to punish Sir Percival Glyde for what he had done to Laura.
- g ..... tells Walter Hartright to go to the church near Blackwater Park.

### Chapters 4–7

#### 7 Mark each statement true (T) or false (F).

- a Walter didn't find any record about Sir Percival's parents' marriage.
- b Mrs Catherick knew that Sir Percival's parents hadn't been married.
- c There was an official enquiry about Sir Percival's death.
- d There was an explanation why Laura and Anne Catherick were so much alike.
- e Walter Hartright and Laura had a little girl.
- f After Mr Fairlie dies, Limmeridge House belongs to Walter Hartright.
- g The future owner of Limmeridge House is Walter Hartright's son.



## The Woman in White

### Book key

- 1 a exclaim, gasp, sigh  
b veil, waistcoat  
c accomplice, ancestor, angel, gamekeeper, maid  
d asylum, veranda, vestry
- 2 a She is a lonely, frightened young woman dressed all in white who Walter Hartright meets one night on a lonely road in London. Her real name is Anne Catherick. She looks very like Laura Fairlie and knows a dangerous secret about Sir Percival Glyde.  
b He is famous for writing the first detective novels in English.  
c *The Woman in White* (1860) and *The Moonstone* (1868).  
d Sir Percival Glyde and his friend, Count Fosco.
- 3 a French > Art  
b Hampstead Heath > Limmeridge House  
c Cumberland > London  
d sister > half-sister  
e interested > uninterested  
f Marian > Laura  
g Marian > Laura  
h Gilmore > Glyde  
i good > bad/wicked
- 4 a Because he meets her at night on a lonely road. She frightens him by touching him on the shoulder from behind and is dressed all in white. She tells him that she wants to go to London, and he discovers that she lived in a village called Limmeridge, where Walter is going to work.  
b Because the Woman in White talked about a village school that she went to as a child in Limmeridge for some months. She said it was run by Mrs Fairlie, who was Marian's mother and her good friend. Marian finds a letter from her mother which describes a little girl who went to the village school one summer. She was called Anne Catherick and always wore white.  
c Because she knows that Walter is in love with Laura. But Laura's future husband is arriving in a few days and the couple will marry soon.  
d It was arranged two years ago by Laura's father, before he died.  
e Because it describes Sir Percival exactly and says that he is an evil man who will harm Laura if she marries him.
- 5–6 Open answers
- 7 a 5 b 3 c 6 d 4 e 1 f 7 g 2
- 8 a Walter and Marian ask people at the village school if they have seen a strange woman. A little boy tells them this and adds that the ghost was in the churchyard, standing by a grave with a white cross. Marian realizes that the grave is her mother's.  
b Walter finds the Woman in White by the grave. She tells him that she is indeed Anne Catherick and that she has run away from an asylum, where she was placed by Sir Percival Glyde.  
c Marian says this to Walter. They are not happy about Laura's marriage to Sir Percival and want to know why he put Anne Catherick in an asylum.  
d Mr Fairlie writes this in a note to Walter after Walter has told him that he is going to leave Limmeridge House.  
e The farmer's wife at Todd's Corner says this to Walter and Marian when they come to talk to Anne Catherick. She says that Anne has left and that she became ill when she was told that Sir Percival Glyde was coming to Limmeridge House.  
f The family lawyer, Mr Gilmore, says this to Walter after Marian has told him about the letter to Laura. He says he will send a copy of the letter to Sir Percival and ask for an explanation.  
g Marian says this to Walter on the last evening before Walter leaves. Laura has suddenly left the room without saying goodbye to Walter.  
h Laura returns when Walter is alone and says these words to him. He realizes then that she loves him.
- 9 a Anne Catherick seems sad, confused and very frightened.  
b Marian is a lively, friendly young woman who uses her high intelligence to try and discover the truth about the letter and Anne Catherick.  
c Mr Fairlie is a very nervous man, interested in nothing except his own health.
- 10–11 Open answers
- 12 a ✓ b X c X d ✓ e X f ✓ g X h X  
i X j ✓
- 13 a ... Anne's mother worked as a loyal servant for Sir Percival several years ago. Anne had had mental problems since she was a child and her problems became so bad that Sir Percival paid for her to be placed in an asylum where she would be well looked after.

## The Woman in White

- b** ... she found out that he had placed her in the asylum. She had not understood that he had done this out of kindness. As a result she hated him.
- c** ... to go to Marian.
- d** ... he is selfish and doesn't want to be disturbed.
- e** ... contacting two old friends of her mothers who are able to find Walter work. He is offered a place on an expedition to South America.
- f** ... agreeing that the marriage will take place on 22nd December, which is in four weeks' time, far too soon for Laura.
- g** ... take Laura to Italy for six months. There they will meet Sir Percival's old friend, Count Fosco. In June they will go back to Sir Percival's home and Marian will come and live there.
- 14–16** Open answers
- 17 a** six
- b** Mrs Catherick
- c** rude
- d** lawyer
- e** money
- f** sign
- g** figure
- h** Anne Catherick
- i** destroy
- 18 a** In the boathouse at Blackwater Park she finds a dog that has been shot. She learns from the housekeeper that the dog belongs to Mrs Catherick, who had come to Blackwater Park in secret, looking for her daughter.
- b** Mrs Catherick had asked the housekeeper not to tell Sir Percival that she had been there. But Sir Percival had said that he and Mrs Catherick knew each other well.
- c** Mr Merriman is Sir Percival's lawyer. He tells Sir Percival that he has debts that he must pay very soon and that he must persuade Laura to sign a document giving him her money so that he can pay these debts.
- d** She says she can't sign anything unless she knows what it is.
- e** Laura thinks she has dropped a little bracelet in the boathouse and goes there to find it. Anne Catherick is there and has found the bracelet.
- f** Because she realizes there is someone out there watching them.
- g** They agree to meet the next day at the same time.
- 19 a** Laura has changed a lot since she married Sir Percival. She no longer looks innocent and happy and her eyes look sad. She tells Marian that she is very unhappy and that Sir Percival treats her cruelly.
- b** Marian feels guilty because she told Walter to leave Limmeridge House and encouraged him to travel to South America, a very dangerous place. She did this so that Laura could keep her promise to Sir Percival, who treats her cruelly.
- c** Count Fosco is a very fat man of about sixty who wears colourful, expensive clothes. He is very interesting and attractive, particularly to women. He talks well and knows how to listen. He loves small animals and birds and keeps pet mice. Marian thinks he has a strong influence over Sir Percival and sees him as very dangerous.
- 20–21** Open answers
- 22 a** 4 **b** 8 **c** 6 **d** 2 **e** 1 **f** 7 **g** 3 **h** 5
- 23 a** In her note, Anne Catherick tells Laura that she was seen by a fat old man and had to run away. As Laura reads the note in the boathouse, Sir Percival comes in and is very angry. Marian and Laura realize that Count Fosco saw Anne and told Sir Percival.
- b** In their conversation, the two men discuss the fact that they desperately need money. Count Fosco suggests to Sir Percival that if Laura died soon he would get her money. Sir Percival replies that the problem is Anne Catherick, who knows a terrible secret about him, which is why he shut her up in the asylum. He says he must find her and that she looks like Laura would look after a long illness. Count Fosco says that he now knows what to look for.
- c** Marian becomes ill after listening to the conversation between Sir Percival and Count Fosco in the rain. Sir Percival sends the housekeeper, Mrs Michelson, away for a few days, and when she returns he tells her that Count Fosco has taken Marian to London with him and that Marian will then go north to Limmeridge House. Laura has also been ill for a few days and he tells her to follow Marian to London, which she does.
- d** Walter returns from South America. He is very shocked when he hears of Laura's death and goes to visit her grave. There he sees two veiled women, who lift their veils when they see him. They are Marian and Laura.

## The Woman in White

**24** This chapter is told by Count Fosco's new cook, Hester Pinhorn. She says that Laura arrives at Count Fosco's house looking very ill and frightened. As soon as she arrives, she faints. A doctor is called and says she has a serious heart disease and will die very soon. Laura dies the next day and the Count seems very upset. Arrangements are made to bury Laura in the same grave as her mother. Sir Percival is abroad and unable to come to the funeral, but Count Fosco goes.

**25–26** Open answers

**27** a Walter b Mr Gilmore c Lady Glyde  
d Marian e Count Fosco f Count Fosco  
g Mr Fairlie h Walter i Mrs Catherick

- 28** a Walter, Marian and Laura have gone to London and are renting rooms in a poor part of the city in order to hide from Sir Percival and Count Fosco. Laura is greatly changed because of the experiences she has had.
- b When Marian recovers from her illness at Blackwater Park, the housekeeper, who is the only person still there, tells her that Laura has gone to stay with Count Fosco. Marian then receives a letter from Count Fosco saying that Laura had become ill and died very suddenly.
- c Sir Percival writes a letter to Mr Fairlie saying that Anne Catherick is in an asylum and claims she is Lady Glyde. Sir Percival tells Mr Fairlie to ignore her letter, if she writes.
- d Marian finds Laura in the asylum and offers a nurse money to help Laura escape. The nurse agrees.
- e When Laura arrives at Count Fosco's house, she is given some drugged tea and becomes unconscious. When she wakes up she is in an asylum and is wearing Anne Catherick's clothes.
- f When Marian takes Laura back to Limmeridge House, no one recognizes her because her appearance has changed so much. Because of Sir Percival's letter, Mr Fairlie believes Laura is Anne Catherick and threatens to call the police. Marian decides that they must leave Limmeridge House and go to London.

**29–32** Open answers

**33** a ✓ b ✗ c ✓ d ✗ e ✗ f ✗ g ✗ h ✓

- 34** a Sir Percival dies in a fire in the church. He has come there to destroy the marriage records because Mrs Catherick has warned him that Walter knows his secret. However, he locks himself in the vestry, where the records are kept, and lights a match. This starts a fire but the lock on the door breaks and he cannot get out. He dies in the fire.
- b He climbs on to the vestry roof and breaks a small glass window. But flames shoot out and he cannot see Sir Percival. Then he and some men find a long piece of wood and break down the vestry door but they cannot enter because of the flames.
- c He sells his house in North London and goes to live abroad. Walter does not pursue him. Years later, it is learnt that he died in Paris.
- d Walter and Laura marry. They tell Mr Gilmore the story and he informs Mr Fairlie. They go to Limmeridge House and tell everyone the truth about what happened and then return to London. A year later they have a son called Walter. Mr Fairlie dies and Laura becomes the owner of Limmeridge House.

**35–46** Open answers

### Discussion activities key

**1–39** Open answers

### Activity worksheets key

- 1** a a sketch  
b a fortune  
c to disturb  
d a settlement  
e a maid
- 2** a Walter to the Woman in White; when he suddenly met her at Hampstead Heath and she asked him to help her.  
b The Woman in White to Walter; when he told her he was going to Limmeridge House the next day.  
c Marian to Walter; during their first meeting when she was describing Mr Fairlie.  
d Marian to Walter; on reading her mother's letters she found some information which could be relevant to the Woman in White.  
e Marian to Walter; when she guessed that Walter had fallen in love with Laura.

## The Woman in White

- 3 a ~~a long dark blue coat~~ > white clothes  
 b ~~to meet Walter Hartright~~ > to visit Mrs Fairlie's grave  
 c Anne Catherick didn't get on well with her mother and didn't want to visit her.  
 d Mr Fairlie was upset by Walter's decision to leave and got disappointed in him.  
 e Mr Gilmore was the Fairlies' family lawyer. He was going to draw up Laura's marriage settlement.  
 f Mr Gilmore and Marian did most of the talking, Laura and Walter were sad and silent.

- 4 a servant  
 b hesitation  
 c drew up  
 d give in  
 e containing  
 f damaged  
 g jewellery

- 5 a housekeeper  
 b ancestor  
 c gloomy  
 d gamekeeper  
 e innocent  
 f creep (crept)  
 g to attend to  
 h relationship  
 i to work out

- 6 a F b F c F d T e F f T g T

- 7 a ... have met Count Fosco  
 b ... wouldn't have run away  
 c ... wouldn't have heard Sir Percival and Count Fosco's conversation  
 d ... wouldn't have become ill  
 e ... would not have seen Laura, Lady Glyde, at her own grave

- 8 a 4 b 3 c 6 d 2 e 1 f 5

- 9 a T b F c T d F e T f T g T h F  
 i F

- 10 a ... because the lock was broken.  
 b Walter Hartright tried to rescue him.  
 c Laura's father was Anne Catherick's father too.  
 d Count Fosco died in Paris.  
 e Mr Fairlie died of a heart attack.  
 f Laura inherited Limmeridge House.

11–12 Open answers

### Progress test key

- 1 a 2 b 1 c 1

- 2 a Marian  
 b The Woman in White/Anne Catherick  
 c The Woman in White/Anne Catherick  
 d The farmer's wife  
 e Frederick Fairlie  
 f Mr Gilmore

- 3 a 4 b 2 c 1 d 5 e 3

- 4 a Marian  
 b cruel and wicked  
 c dangerous  
 d guilty  
 e bracelet  
 f Anne Catherick  
 g Glyde

- 5 a T b T c F d F e T f T g F

- 6 a Laura  
 b Count Fosco  
 c Marian  
 d Count Fosco  
 e Mrs Catherick  
 f Walter Hartright  
 g Mrs Catherick

- 7 a F b T c T d T e F f F g T

| ISBN                                   | Reader Title  | Author                                   | Language         | Word Count | Headwords | Pages | Blurbs   |
|--|---|--|------------------|------------|-----------|-------|--|
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